



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

NEWS RELEASE

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BAUCUS COMMENTS ON RELEASE OF HHS INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT

Government Accounting Office Concludes Review of Former IG Janet Rehnquist

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) U.S. Senator Max Baucus today commented on the release of a Government Accounting Office (GAO) report on the management of the Office of Inspector General within the Department of Health and Human Services under the leadership of former Inspector General Janet Rehnquist. Ms. Rehnquist resigned from the office effective June 1, 2003.

Last October, Baucus and Senator Grassley sent a letter to the GAO requesting the management review of the Office of Inspector General in response to reports of high turnover among senior career staff in the office.

Baucus Quote:

"I would like to thank the GAO staff for their diligent work on this sensitive and difficult matter. The GAO's report confirms that Ms. Rehnquist was not the right person for this crucial job. The next Inspector General must be fair, firm, and he or she must put the interests of American taxpayers and program beneficiaries above all else – including politics.

"Now that this chapter is over, I am looking forward to an era of rebuilding within the Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General. I hope that the President will offer an Inspector General nominee in the very near future, and that he or she has the management experience and integrity to restore confidence in the Office of Inspector General. Taxpayers and all those who benefit from Medicare, Medicaid and many other programs in the Department of Health and Human Services deserve a watchdog who will make program integrity the highest priority."

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GAO report available upon request.